

Braille Monitor



DECEMBER, 1982

VOICE OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND



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THE BRAILLE MONITOR

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NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND

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THE BRAILLE MONITOR

PUBLISHED MONTHLY IN INKPRINT, BRAILLE, AND ON TALKING BOOK DISCS BY
THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND

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LETTERS FOR THE PRESIDENT, ADDRESS CHANGES,
SUBSCRIPTION REQUESTS, AND ORDERS FOR NFB LITERATURE,
ARTICLES FOR THE MONITOR AND LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
SHOULD BE SENT TO THE NATIONAL OFFICE

* * *

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NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND
BOX 11185
KANSAS CITY, KANSAS 66111

* * *

If you or a friend would like to remember the National Federation of the Blind in your will, you can do so by employing the following language:

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* * *

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SPEAKING FOR THE BLIND—IT IS THE BLIND SPEAKING FOR THEMSELVES

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CONVENTION BULLETIN

It is time to plan for next summer's NFB convention, and what a convention it promises to be! We are going to Kansas City. We will headquarter at the Radisson Muehlebach Hotel.

The Muehlebach is one of the truly fine hotels in the nation. It is rich in history and tradition, and it has been renovated to a standard of unexcelled comfort and luxury. Our rates continue to be unbelievably good. They are: single rooms \$19.00; doubles and twins \$24.00; and \$10.00 for each additional person in the room—plus tax of 8.125% on each room. There will be no charge for children who stay in the same room with their parents.

All requests for reservations should be sent to the Radisson Muehlebach Hotel, 12th and Baltimore, Kansas City, Missouri 64105; telephone (816) 471-1400. For each room reservation include a check or money order in the amount of \$20.00 made payable to Radisson Muehlebach Hotel. This deposit must be included in order for your reservation to be made. The \$20.00 (which is *not* refundable) will apply toward your room bill. Your request for reservations should include the following: 1) Your name and address; 2) Your date of arrival; 3) Your date of departure; and 4) What kind of room you want—single, double, triple, or quad.

Registration will begin Sunday, July 3; but as usual in recent years, many of the delegates will probably arrive by Friday, July 1. The meeting of the Board of Directors (which is an official business session of the convention and which is open to all)

will take place Monday morning, July 4. Business sessions of the convention will occur Tuesday morning, Tuesday afternoon, Wednesday morning, Thursday morning, Thursday afternoon, Friday morning, and Friday afternoon. Final adjournment will occur at five o'clock Friday afternoon. The banquet will be held Thursday evening, July 7.

At the 1982 convention in Minneapolis increased time was allotted to resolutions and business. The same pattern will be followed for the 1983 convention. The agenda will be so arranged as to allow sufficient time for full discussion and debate of resolutions.

An important part of the convention is the door prizes. Chapters and affiliates should begin now to collect these. In the past we have informally put a minimum value of \$25.00 on prizes; but many have been worth considerably more. If you wish to mail door prizes to Kansas City before next summer, send them to Gary Wunder, 103 East Stewart Road, Apt. 2, Columbia, Missouri 65201.

One of the high points of next summer's convention should be the announcement of the winners of the Associates Contest. Remember that the first prize is \$1,000, the second prize \$500, the third prize \$200, and the fourth prize \$100. It will be remembered that Sandy Sanderson of Alaska was the 1982 winner (as well as the 1981 winner). However, a number of other people claim that they intend to make a strong challenge this year.

In recent years we have tried to streamline our process of considering resolutions. The procedure worked well in Minneapolis, and it will be continued in Kansas City in 1983. If a resolution is to be considered, it must be in the hands of the Chairman of the Resolutions Committee in written draft form no later than two o'clock Sunday afternoon, July 3. Furthermore, someone must be present to speak in behalf of the resolution and to negotiate concerning possible changes in wording or content. Of course, we will continue our policy of not permitting the Resolutions Committee to bottle up a resolution. If the author is not satisfied with the Committee's action, he or she may take the resolution directly to the convention floor. The resolutions passed by the convention are statements of policy which determine the actions and direction of the Federation.

Gary Wunder, the capable President of the Missouri affiliate, can be reached at 103 East Stewart Road, Apt. 2, Columbia, Missouri 65201; telephone (314) 874-1774. Gary and the other Missouri members say

that they are going all out to make this the best convention we have ever had.

It should be remembered that Kansas City borders both Missouri and Kansas. Dick Edlund, who is not only national Treasurer but also President of the Kansas affiliate, lives in Kansas City, and many of the other Kansas members live in the immediate vicinity or nearby. The Kansans will be attending the 1983 convention in large numbers and helping make it the success which it will be.

Kansas City is ideal for a convention. It has fine restaurants, excellent shopping facilities, and exciting places to go.

Reservations will be taken on a first come first serve basis, and when the Muehlebach has been filled, reservations will be placed in nearby hotels, where we have made arrangements for overflow accommodations. Those who do not get their reservations in early may not be able to get a room in the headquarters hotel. This is sure to be the greatest convention we have ever had—so here we come, Kansas City; and get those reservations in!

RAMONA WALHOF APPOINTED DIRECTOR OF

IDAHO COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND

by Kenneth Jernigan

Tuesday, September 28, 1982, Mrs. Ramona Walhof was appointed Director of the Idaho Commission for the Blind. The Idaho Commission is the agency responsible for administering rehabilitation and other programs for the blind throughout the state. It has a three-member policy board and has its own building in Boise, as

well as field offices in other parts of the state.

The National Federation of the Blind was instrumental in bringing the Idaho Commission for the Blind into being in the 1960's, and the President of the NFB of Idaho has always served as one of the members of the Commission board. Dr.

Norman Gardner, the able President of the NFB of Idaho, currently holds membership on the board. He conscientiously and energetically performs the duties of the office.

The appointment of Mrs. Walhof as Director is not only a personal tribute to her ability but also a step forward for the blind of the entire country. It emphasizes the continuing partnership of the organized blind of Idaho and the state agency, but it does more than that: It symbolizes the new gains which the blind are making all over the nation, and it speaks of hope and belief and plans for the future.

I first knew Ramona Walhof when she was a student just out of high school. She came to the Iowa Commission for the Blind for training, and it was immediately clear that she had both intelligence and sensitivity. It was equally obvious that there was great promise of future contribution and ability to mature.

In 1962 Mrs. Walhof went to Georgetown University to take a special intensive language course for blind students sponsored by H.E.W. She then completed work for a B.S. degree at the Institute of Languages and Linguistics at Georgetown. She was elected to *Who's Who Among Students in Colleges and Universities of America*, became a member of the Gamma Phi Epsilon Honor Sorority, and was chosen to membership in the Dobro Slovo National Slavic Honor Society.

In 1967 she returned to Iowa to teach in the Orientation Center of the Iowa Commission for the Blind. In 1968 she married and moved to Idaho. During the next four years she took additional training at Boise State College, managed a cafeteria, taught courses in Russian at Boise State College, had two children, and suffered the pain of the death of her husband.

In 1972 she returned to Des Moines to work again at the Iowa Commission for the

Blind. She was Orientation Teacher, Orientation Program Supervisor, Supervisor of Technical Services, and finally Assistant Director in Charge of Training and Development. She was one of the people who helped set the goals and shape the programs of the Iowa Commission for the Blind during the years of its greatest accomplishments.

In March of 1979 she came to Baltimore to participate in the development of the exciting new programs at the National Center for the Blind. She was in charge of the National Blindness Information Center and was later Assistant Director of Job Opportunities for the Blind (JOB). Her work in Baltimore was effective and tireless. She was instrumental in reorganizing and strengthening the National Federation of the Blind of Delaware; she wrote several books and numerous articles; she contacted blind people throughout the country to encourage and assist them in finding employment; and she would, beyond any doubts, have been unanimously elected as President of the local chapter of the Federation if she had remained in Baltimore. In 1979 she was elected to membership on the Board of Directors of Baltimore's Radio Reading Service, and in 1980 she was chosen to serve on the Board of the Baltimore Braille Association.

She has to her credit an impressive list of publications. In the mid-1970's she co-authored with Mabel Nading *Beginning Braille for Adults*. Other books she has authored are: *Section 504 and Blind Employees: A Guide to Reasonable Accommodation and an Illustrative List of Job Opportunities*, 1979; *Questions Kids Ask About Blindness*, 1980; *A Handbook for Senior Citizens: Rights, Resources and Responsibilities*, 1981; and *Have You Considered . . .?*, 1981. Among her numerous articles are: "Braille: A Comedy or a Tragedy," and "I am a Blind Mother Fighting to

Keep my Children from Corruption.”

She has now moved to Idaho to direct the Commission for the Blind, and her place at the National Center will be hard, indeed, to fill. She is imaginative, creative, determined, and perceptive; but she also has a warmth and vitality which have made her increasingly popular and influential throughout our movement. It is hard to imagine that Idaho could have found a better or more qualified director for its programs for the blind. There seems every likelihood that the Idaho Commission for the Blind will go forward to new levels of accomplishment and creativity under the leadership of Ramona Walhof.

In her new job she faces challenges and

battles. There are budget problems and threats of reorganization. Strong leadership will be required, but she will provide that leadership. Sensitivity and understanding will also be required—but, again, she will provide them.

On October 16 (just a week before her departure) the Baltimore Chapter of the NFB had a cookout and a going away party in Mrs. Walhof's honor. Almost a hundred people were in attendance. There was a strong sense of regret at her leaving; there were many good wishes for the success of her work in Idaho; but above all, there was an outpouring of love and closeness—a foreshadowing of the future in her new career.

ON THE NATURE OF NAME-CALLING

by *Kenneth Jernigan*

"Name-calling" is a bad thing. Everybody agrees on that, but what exactly does the term mean? If you call a communist a communist, is that "name-calling?" If you call an individual a republican or a democrat, is that "name-calling?"

We would probably have to know whether the allegations are true and something about the circumstances and the climate of opinion. In Russia, for instance, it would doubtless be regarded as a compliment to be called a communist. In America the matter is more complex. If the individual *is* a communist, he or she might (in certain circumstances) regard it as a tribute. If the individual is not a communist (in other words if the allegation is a lie), the term will most likely be bitterly resented and will properly be regarded as "name-calling." The labels democrat and republican are less controversial but still may be used to downgrade or belittle. So we start with the fact that a thing must be false before it is "name-calling," and it probably must also be intended to discredit or damage.

What if we call a person a communist and what if what we are saying is the truth? Is that "name-calling?" No. Even if the individual is trying to hide the fact of his communism and bitterly resents the exposure—even if he or she denounces you as engaging in innuendo and "name-calling," the truth of the charge is sufficient. It removes the matter from "name-calling"

and puts it into a different ball park. It may be embarrassing; it may cause resentment; it may cause trouble or controversy; it may even be intended to hurt; but it cannot properly be labeled as "name-calling."

Thus far we have only dealt with the overt forms of "name-calling," but what about the more subtle kinds? Suppose an individual takes a statement you have made and alleges that it means what it clearly does not mean. Suppose further that the individual knows that the people who will read or hear the interpretation may not have the facts to know that what he or she is saying is not the truth. Is that "name-calling?" Yes, it is. In fact, it is the most dishonorable and reprehensible type which can be engaged in.

Take the matter a step further: Suppose you catch the individual red-handed and call him or her to task for what has been done. Does that mean that you, in your own turn, are engaging in "name-calling?" Not at all. The original test applies. If what the individual has charged is false, you are not guilty of "name-calling" for exposing the fallacy even if you do it in the strongest terms. Of course, if what was charged is true, you *are* guilty of "name-calling," and you would do better to hold your peace and keep silent.

Something else must be added: Even if the charge is false, the individual will not be guilty of "name-calling" if he or she

does not have the intelligence or maturity to understand the implications of what is being said. A child, for instance, is not ordinarily regarded as engaging in "name-calling" if he or she calls another person by an unflattering name or misinterprets what that person has said. It may be regarded as funny; or it may be dismissed as merely an act of immaturity, lack of understanding, or excusable ignorance—but it will not be thought of as "name-calling." The same applies to the severely retarded, people who have had some traumatic experience and are completely disoriented, people in foreign countries and strange circumstances, et cetera. In other words, "name-calling" (as used in present day terms) is a trademark of those who purport to be rational, accountable adults.

And this brings me to an article I recently read. It was written by Grant Mack, President of the American Council of the Blind; and it appears in the August, 1982, issue of the *Braille Forum*, which is the official publication of the American Council of the Blind. The falsity and the "name-calling" in Mr. Mack's article are capsulized in the following two paragraphs:

Some people say that blindness is merely a nuisance and not a severe handicap. To those people who subscribe to that philosophy, I would suggest that they are simply fooling themselves. A condition that can so dramatically change one's performance level [he is talking here about bowling] is more than a mere nuisance.

Fortunately, in the case of bowling, someone a long time ago was smart enough to realize that with skillful use of a bowling rail, a blind person could compete with anyone. Either stupidity or stubbornness would cause a blind person who really wants to bowl to

refuse to use a rail. It is hard to realize that there are some blind people who will deny that blindness will affect their bowling or other abilities. These are the people who say that blindness is merely a nuisance.

This is what Mr. Mack says, and he is obviously talking about the National Federation of the Blind. Almost every sentence he has written is false and is a misrepresentation of our philosophy. He says that we allege that blindness is merely a nuisance and not a severe handicap. There is a difference in the *disability* of blindness (which is physical) and the *handicap* of blindness (which relates to social attitudes and practices). The handicap of blindness can be severe, indeed—but it need not be. Mr. Mack says that: "A condition that can so dramatically change one's performance level [in bowling] is more than a mere nuisance." Nonsense!

Mr. Mack goes on to say that with the use of a bowling rail a blind person can compete with anyone. I don't believe it, and later in the same paragraph he denies it himself. He says that there are some blind people who will actually deny that blindness will affect their bowling or other abilities. Which way does he want it? Mr. Mack says that people who say that blindness is merely a nuisance are so stupid or stubborn that they would refuse to use a bowling rail even if they wanted to bowl; and it is clear that he is talking about us—in other words, "name-calling" since what he says is false and meant to damage.

I, for one, would have no objection at all to using a bowling rail, and on the few times that I have engaged in that activity I have done so—that is, if a rail was available. I doubt that a blind bowler (with or without a rail) can consistently make as high a score as a truly expert sighted bowler—and I think all of this has absolutely nothing to

do with whether blindness can or cannot be reduced to the level of a mere nuisance. In fact, I say here (as I have often said before) that if there is proper training and opportunity, blindness can be reduced to the level of a mere physical nuisance.

I think that what Grant Mack has said about us and our philosophy is not only false but deliberately and knowingly false. To assume otherwise would be to attribute to him the characteristics of the child or the immature. Whatever else may be said, it is clear that one of us has engaged in "name-calling" and innuendo. Which one of us is it? If what Mr. Mack has said in his article is true, I am the guilty party. If what he has said is false, then he is the guilty party. Since the American Council of the Blind and the National Federation of the Blind are so often at odds, it is important to get at the truth of the question. It has implications far beyond the matter of bowling rails. It is a touchstone by which we can measure other statements by both organizations. It has to do with basic honesty and integrity.

I believe the record will speak for itself and that it is unmistakably clear. However, let the reader be the judge. We are herewith printing the entire text of Mr. Mack's

article from the August, 1982, *Braille Forum*. Immediately following his article we are printing "Blindness: Handicap or Characteristic" and "Blindness: A Left-Handed Dissertation." Both of these articles have been widely disseminated and are well-known as statements of Federation philosophy. Mr. Mack has read them, or certainly could have read them if he had wanted to.

"Blindness: Handicap or Characteristic" was first given as a banquet speech at the National Federation of the Blind convention in Philadelphia in 1963. It has been printed in the *Monitor* several times and has also been printed in *Vital Speeches*. We distributed tens of thousands of copies throughout the country.

"Blindness: A Left-Handed Dissertation" was first presented at the National Federation of the Blind convention in New York in 1973. It, too, has been printed in the *Monitor* and has been reprinted and circulated by the tens of thousands.

Let the reader examine what Mr. Mack says about our philosophy and compare it with what we ourselves say. Who has engaged in "name-calling?" Who has told the truth?

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by *Grant Mack*

(Reprinted from *Braille Forum*, August, 1982)

All my life, I have been a sports buff, both as a spectator and as a participant. One of my fondest memories is of Ted Williams swinging a bat in Fenway Park.

Memories of high school and college days center around playing football and the smell of gymnasiums. I had been an active participant in baseball, basketball, tennis,

horseshoes—anything connected with sports and physical activity.

From 1949 until 1970, I bowled in at least one winter league and competed in at least one yearly tournament, although basically I was a once-a-week bowler. My average until my vision started to slip was 160 to 170. My highest game in league play was 254 and in tournament competition, 269. Toward the end of my career as a participant in a sighted league, my average slipped to the low 140's. The spots in the alley disappeared and I was having trouble orienting myself on the approach. Finally, at my behest—and probably just before my teammates would have requested it—I voluntarily withdrew from the team.

About two months ago, I had my first experience as a blind bowler using a rail. Even though it had been many years since I had bowled, because of my past experience, I really felt confident that I would be able to make a reasonable score. What a shock it was when I discovered this was a completely new "ball game." My first four balls were gutter balls, and I had neither a spare nor a strike during the entire game. In fact, it was a little embarrassing to end up with a score of 27. The second game showed some improvement. I did make one spare and raised my score to 51.

Blindness has certainly put a new dimension on my bowling activity. It is obvious that I will need to learn how to use a bowling rail more effectively. My approach and delivery will need to be completely restructured before bowling once again becomes a

very enjoyable, comfortable pastime. There is no question in my mind that with a lot of patience and some good coaching, I can once again become at least an average bowler.

Some people say that blindness is merely a nuisance and not a severe handicap. To those people who subscribe to that philosophy, I would suggest that they are simply fooling themselves. A condition that can so dramatically change one's performance level is more than a mere nuisance.

Fortunately, in the case of bowling, someone a long time ago was smart enough to recognize that with skillful use of a bowling rail, a blind person could compete with anyone. Either stupidity or stubbornness would cause a blind person who really wants to bowl to refuse the use of a rail. It is hard to realize that there are some blind people who will deny that blindness will affect their bowling or other abilities. These are the people who say that blindness is merely a nuisance.

The solution of any problem must begin with recognition that a problem exists. Indeed fortunate is the blind person who recognizes that his blindness brings about some limitations. Even more fortunate are those who recognize that with the right kind of training and with the proper use of devices and aids that have been perfected over the years, they can learn to do just about anything, whether it be participating in sports and recreational activities or performing at more than adequate levels occupationally or professionally.

BLINDNESS—HANDICAP OR CHARACTERISTIC

by Kenneth Jernigan

It has been wisely observed that philosophy bakes no bread. It has, with equal wisdom, been observed that without a philosophy no bread is baked. Let me talk to you, then of philosophy—my philosophy concerning blindness—and, in a broader sense, my philosophy concerning handicaps in general.

One prominent authority recently said, *Loss of sight is a dying. When, in the full current of his sighted life, blindness comes on a man, it is the end, the death, of that sighted life . . . It is superficial, if not naive, to think of blindness as a blow to the eyes only, to sight only. It is a destructive blow to the self-image of a man . . . a blow almost to his being itself.*

This is one view, a view held by a substantial number of people in the world today. But it is not the only view. In my opinion it is not the correct view. What is blindness? Is it a “dying”?

No one is likely to disagree with me if I say that blindness, first of all, is a characteristic. But a great many people will disagree when I go on to say that blindness is *only* a characteristic. It is nothing more or less than that. It is nothing more special, or more peculiar, or more terrible than that suggests. When we understand the nature of blindness as a characteristic—a normal characteristic like hundreds of others with which each of us must live—we shall better understand the real need to be met by services to the blind, as well as the false

needs which should not be met.

By definition a characteristic—any characteristic—is a limitation. A *white* house, for example, is a limited house; it cannot be green or blue or red; it is limited to being white. Likewise every characteristic—those we regard as strengths as well as those we regard as weaknesses—is a limitation. Each one freezes us to some extent into a mold; each restricts to some degree the range of possibility, of flexibility, and very often of opportunity as well.

Blindness is such a limitation. Are blind people more limited than others?

Let us make a simple comparison. Take a sighted person with an average mind (something not too hard to locate); take a blind person with a superior mind (something not impossible to locate)—and then make all the other characteristics of these two persons equal (something which certainly is impossible). Now, which of the two is more limited? It depends, of course, entirely on what you wish them to do. If you are choosing up sides for baseball, then the blind man is more limited—that is, he is “handicapped”. If you are seeking someone to teach history or science or to figure out your income tax, then the sighted person is more limited or “handicapped”.

Many human characteristics are obvious limitations; others are not so obvious. Poverty (the lack of material means) is one of the most obvious. Ignorance (the lack of knowledge or education) is another. Old

age (the lack of youth and vigor) is yet another. Blindness (the lack of eyesight) is still another. In all these cases the limitations are apparent, or seem to be. But let us look at some other common characteristics which do *not* seem limiting. Take the very opposite of old age—youth. Is age a limitation in the case of a youth of twenty? Indeed it is, for a person who is twenty will not be considered for most responsible positions, especially supervisory and leadership positions. He may be entirely mature, fully capable, in every way the best qualified applicant for the job. Even so, his age will bar him from employment; he will be classified as too green and immature to handle the responsibility. And even if he were to land the position, others on the job would almost certainly resent being supervised by one so young. The characteristic of being twenty is definitely a limitation.

The same holds true for any other age. Take age fifty, which many regard as the prime of life. The man of fifty does not have the physical vigor he possessed at twenty; and, indeed, most companies will not start a new employee at that age. The Bell Telephone System, for example, has a general prohibition against hiring anyone over the age of thirty-five. But it is interesting to note that the United States Constitution has a prohibition against having anyone *under* thirty-five running for President. The moral is plain: any age carries its built-in limitations.

Let us take another unlikely handicap—not that of ignorance, but its exact opposite. Can it be said that *education* is ever a handicap? The answer is definitely yes. In the agency which I head I would not hire Albert Einstein under any circumstances if he were today alive and available. His fame (other people would continually flock to the agency and prevent us from doing our work) and his intelligence (he would be bored to madness by the routine

of most of our jobs) would both be too severe as limitations.

Here is an actual case in point. Some time ago a vacancy occurred on the library staff at the Iowa Commission for the Blind. Someone was needed to perform certain clerical duties and take charge of shelving and checking talking book records. After all applicants had been screened, the final choice came down to two. Applicant A had a college degree, was seemingly alert, and clearly of more than average intelligence. Applicant B had a high school diploma (no college), was of average intelligence, and possessed only moderate initiative. I hired applicant B. Why? Because I suspected that applicant A would regard the work as beneath him, would soon become bored with its undemanding assignments, and would leave as soon as something better came along. I would then have to find and train another employee. On the other hand I felt that applicant B would consider the work interesting and even challenging, that he was thoroughly capable of handling the job, and that he would be not only an excellent but a permanent employee. In fact, he has worked out extremely well.

In other words, in that situation the characteristic of education—the possession of a college degree—was a limitation and a handicap. Even above average intelligence was a limitation; and so was a high level of initiative. There is a familiar bureaucratic label for this unusual disadvantage: it is the term “overqualified”. Even the overqualified, it appears, can be underprivileged.

This should be enough to make the point—which is that if blindness is a limitation (and, indeed, it is), it is so in quite the same way as innumerable other characteristics which human flesh is heir to. I believe that blindness has no more importance than any of a hundred other characteristics and that the average blind person is able to perform the average job in the average career or

calling, provided (and it is a large proviso) he is given training and opportunity.

Often when I have advanced this proposition, I have been met with the response, "But you can't look at it that way. Just consider what you might have done if you had been sighted and still had all the other capacities you now possess."

"Not so," I reply. "We do not compete against what *we might have been*, but only against other people *as they are*, with their combinations of strengths and weaknesses, handicaps and limitations." If we are going down that track, why not ask me what I might have done if I had been born with Rockefeller's money, the brains of Einstein, the physique of the young Joe Louis, and the persuasive abilities of Franklin Roosevelt? (And do I need to remind anyone, in passing, that FDR was severely handicapped physically?) I wonder if anyone ever said to him:

"Mr. President, just consider what you might have done if you had not had polio!"

Others have said to me, "But I formerly had my sight, so I know what I am missing."

To which one might reply, "And I was formerly twenty, so I know what I am missing." Our characteristics are constantly changing, and we are forever acquiring new experiences, limitations, and assets. We do not compete against what we formerly were but against other people as they now are.

In a recent issue of a well-known professional journal in the field of work with the blind, a blinded veteran who is now a college professor, puts forward a notion of blindness radically different from this. He sets the limitations of blindness apart from all others and makes them unique. Having done this, he can say that all other human characteristics, strengths, and weaknesses, belong in one category—and that with regard to them the blind and the sighted

individual are just about equal. But the blind person also has the additional and unique limitation of his blindness. Therefore, there is really nothing he can do quite as well as the sighted person, and he can continue to hold his job only because there are charity and goodness in the world.

What this blind professor does not observe is that the same distinction he has made regarding blindness could be made with equal plausibility with respect to any of a dozen—perhaps a hundred—other characteristics. For example, suppose we distinguish *intelligence* from all other traits as uniquely different. Then the man with above one hundred twenty-five IQ is just about the same as the man with below one hundred twenty-five IQ—except for intelligence. Therefore, the college professor with less than one hundred twenty-five IQ cannot really do anything as well as the man with more than one hundred twenty-five IQ—and can continue to hold his job only because there are charity and goodness in the world.

"Are we going to assume," says this blind professor, "that all blind people are so wonderful in all other areas that they easily make up for any limitations imposed by loss of sight? I think not." But why, one asks, single out the particular characteristic of blindness? We might just as well specify some other. For instance, are we going to assume that all people with less than one hundred twenty-five IQ are so wonderful in all other areas that they easily make up for any limitations imposed by lack of intelligence? I think not.

This consideration brings us to the problem of terminology and semantics—and therewith to the heart of the matter of blindness as a handicap. The assumption that the limitation of blindness is so much more severe than others that it warrants being singled out for special definition is built into the very warp and woof of our

language and psychology. Blindness conjures up a condition of unrelieved disaster—something much more terrible and dramatic than other limitations. Moreover, blindness is a conspicuously visible limitation; and there are not so many blind people around that there is any danger of becoming accustomed to it or taking it for granted. If all of those in our midst who possess an IQ under one hundred twenty-five exhibited, say, green stripes on their faces, I suspect that they would begin to be regarded as inferior to the non-striped—and that there would be immediate and tremendous discrimination.

When someone says to a blind person, "You do things so well that I forget you are blind—I simply think of you as being like anybody else," is that really a compliment? Suppose one of us went to France, and someone said:

"You do things so well that I forget you are an American and simply think of you as being like anyone else"—would it be a compliment? Of course, the blind person must not wear a chip on his shoulder or allow himself to become angry or emotionally upset. He should be courteous, and he should accept the statement as the compliment it is meant to be. But he should understand that it is really not complimentary. In reality it says:

"It is normal for blind people to be inferior and limited, different and much less able than the rest of us. Of course, you are still a blind person and still much more limited than I, but you have compensated for it so well that I almost forget that you are inferior to me."

The social attitudes about blindness are all pervasive. Not only do they affect the sighted but also the blind as well. This is one of the most troublesome problems which we have to face. Public attitudes about the blind too often become the attitudes of the blind. The blind tend to see

themselves as others see them. They too often accept the public view of their limitations and thereby do much to make those limitations a reality.

Several years ago Dr. Jacob Freid, at that time a young teacher of sociology and now head of the Jewish Braille Institute of America, performed an interesting experiment. He gave a test in photograph identification to Negro and white students at the university where he was teaching. There was one photograph of a Negro woman in a living room of a home of culture—well furnished with paintings, sculpture, books, and flowers. Asked to identify the person in the photograph, the students said she was a "cleaning woman," "housekeeper," "cook," "laundress," "servant," "domestic," and "mammy". The revealing insight is that the Negro students made the same identifications as the white students. The woman was Mary McLeod Bethune, the most famous Negro woman of her time, founder and president of Bethune-Cookman College, who held a top post during Franklin D. Roosevelt's administration, and a person of brilliance and prestige in the world of higher education. What this incident tells us is that education, like nature, abhors a vacuum, and that when members of a minority group do not have correct and complete information about themselves, they accept the stereotypes of the majority group even when they are false and unjust. Even today, in the midst of the great civil rights debate and protest, one wonders how many Negroes would make the traditional and stereotyped identification of the photograph.

Similarly with the blind the public image is everywhere dominant. This is the explanation for the attitude of those blind persons who are ashamed to carry a white cane or who try to bluff sight which they do not possess. Although great progress is now being made, there are still many

people (sighted as well as blind) who believe that blindness is not altogether respectable.

The blind person must devise alternative techniques to do many things which he would do with sight if he had normal vision. It will be observed that I say *alternative* not *substitute* techniques, for the word *substitute* connotes inferiority, and the alternative techniques employed by the blind person need not be inferior to visual techniques. In fact, some are superior. Of course, some are inferior, and some are equal.

In this connection it is interesting to consider the matter of flying. In comparison with the birds man begins at a disadvantage. He cannot fly. He has no wings. He is "handicapped." But he sees the birds flying, and he longs to do likewise. He cannot use the "normal," bird-like method, so he begins to devise alternative techniques. In his jet airplanes he now flies higher, farther, and faster than any bird which has ever existed. If he had possessed wings, the airplane would probably never have been devised, and the inferior wing-flapping method would still be in general use.

This matter of our irrational images and stereotypes with regard to blindness was brought sharply home to me some time ago during the course of a rehabilitation conference in Little Rock, Arkansas. I found myself engaged in a discussion with a well-known leader in the field of work with the blind who holds quite different views from those I have been advancing. The error in my argument about blindness as a characteristic, he advised me, was that blindness is not in the range of "normal" characteristics; and, therefore, its limitations are radically different from those of other characteristics falling within the normal range. If a *normal* characteristic is simply one possessed by the majority in a

group, then it is not *normal* to have a black skin in America or, for that matter, a white skin in the world at large.

It is not normal to have red hair or be over six feet tall. If, on the other hand, a normal characteristic is simply what this authority or someone else defines as being normal, then we have a circular argument—one that gets us nowhere.

In this same discussion I put forward the theory that a man who was sighted and of average means and who had all other characteristics in common with a blind man of considerable wealth would be less mobile than the blind man. I had been arguing that there were alternative techniques (not substitute) for doing those things which one would do with sight if he had normal vision. The authority I have already mentioned, as well as several others, had been contending that there was no real, adequate substitute for sight in traveling about. I told the story of a wealthy blind man I know who goes to Hawaii or some other place every year and who hires sighted attendants and is much more mobile than any sighted person I know of ordinary means. After all of the discussion and the fact that I thought I had conveyed some understanding of what I was saying, a participant in the conference said—as if he thought he was really making a telling point, "Wouldn't you admit that the wealthy man in question would be even more mobile if he had his sight?"

Which brings us to the subject of services to the blind and more exactly of their proper scope and direction. There are, as I see it, four basic types of services now being provided for blind persons by public and private agencies and volunteer groups in this country today. They are:

1. Services based on the theory that blindness is uniquely different from other characteristics and that it carries with it

permanent inferiority and severe limitations upon activity.

2. Services aimed at teaching the blind person a new and constructive set of attitudes about blindness—based on the premise that the prevailing social attitudes, assimilated involuntarily by the blind person, are mistaken in content and destructive in effect.

3. Services aimed at teaching alternative techniques and skills related to blindness.

4. Services not specifically related to blindness but to other characteristics (such as old age and lack of education), which are nevertheless labeled as “services to the blind” and included under the generous umbrella of the service program.

An illustration of the assumptions underlying the first of these four types of services is the statement quoted earlier which begins, “Loss of sight is a dying.” At the Little Rock conference already mentioned the man who made this statement elaborated on the tragic metaphor by pointing out that “the eye is a sexual symbol” and that, accordingly, the man who has not eyes is not a “whole man.” He cited the play *Oedipus Rex* as proof of his contention that the eye is a sexual symbol. I believe that this misses the whole point of the classic tragedy. Like many moderns, the Greeks considered the severest possible punishment to be the loss of sight. Oedipus committed a mortal sin (unknowingly he had killed his father and married his mother); therefore, his punishment must be correspondingly great. But that is just what his self-imposed blindness was—a punishment, not a sex symbol.

But this view not only misses the point of *Oedipus Rex* it misses the point of blindness. And in so doing it misses the point of services intended to aid the blind. For according to this view what the blind person needs most desperately is the help

of a psychiatrist—of the kind so prominent in evidence at several of the orientation and adjustment centers for the blind throughout the country. According to this view what the blind person needs most is not travel training but therapy. He will be taught to accept his limitations as insurmountable and his difference from others as unbridgeable. He will be encouraged to adjust to his painful station as a second-class citizen—and discouraged from any thought of breaking and entering the first-class compartment. Moreover, all of this will be done in the name of teaching him “independence” and a “realistic” approach to his blindness.

The two competing types of services for the blind—categories one and two on my list of four types—with their underlying conflict of philosophy may perhaps be clarified by a rather fanciful analogy. All of us recall the case of the Jews in Nazi Germany. Suddenly, in the 1930’s, the German Jew was told by his society that he was a “handicapped” person—that he was inferior to other Germans simply by virtue of being a Jew. Given this social fact, what sort of adjustment services might we have offered to the victim of Jewishness? I suggest that there are two alternatives—matching categories one and two of my list of services.

First, since he has been a “normal” individual until quite recently, it is, of course, quite a shock (or “trauma,” as modern lingo has it) for him to learn that he is permanently and constitutionally inferior to others and can engage only in a limited range of activities. He will, therefore, require a psychiatrist to give him counseling and therapy and to reconcile him to his lot. He must “adjust” to his handicap and “learn to live” with the fact that he is not a “whole man.” If he is realistic, he may even manage to be happy. He can be taken to an adjustment center or

put into a workshop, where he may learn a variety of simple crafts and curious occupations suitable to Jews. Again, it should be noted that all of this will be done in the name of teaching him how to live "independently" as a Jew. That is one form of adjustment training: category one of the four types of services outlined earlier.

On the other hand, if there are those around who reject the premise that Jewishness equals inferiority, another sort of "adjustment" service may be undertaken. We might begin by firing the psychiatrist. His services will be available in his own private office, for Jews as for other members of the public, whenever they develop emotional or mental troubles. We will not want the psychiatrist because the Nazi psychiatrist likely has the same misconceptions about Jews as the rest of his society. We might continue then by scrapping the "Jew trades"—the menial routines which offer no competition to the normal world outside. We will take the emphasis off of resignation or of fun and games. We will not work to make the Jew happy in his isolation and servitude, but rather to make him discontent with them. We will make of him not a conformist but a rebel.

And so it is with the blind. There are vast differences in the services offered by various agencies and volunteer groups doing work with the blind throughout the country today. At the Little Rock conference this came up repeatedly. When a blind person comes to a training center, what kind of tests do you give him, and why? In Iowa and some other centers the contention is that he is a responsible individual and that the emphasis should be on *his* knowing what he can do. Some of the centers represented at the Little Rock conference contended that he needed psychiatric help and counseling (regardless of the circumstances and merely by virtue

of his blindness) and that the emphasis should be on the *center personnel's* knowing what he can do. I asked them whether they thought services in a center were more like those given by a hospital or like those given by a law school. In a hospital the person is a "patient". (This is, by the way, a term coming to be used more and more in rehabilitation today.) The doctors decide whether the patient needs an operation and what medication he should have. In reality the "patient" makes few of his own decisions. Will the doctor "let" him do this or that? In a law school, on the other hand, the "student" assumes responsibility for getting to his own classes and organizing his own work. He plans his own career seeking advice to the extent that he feels the need for it. If he plans unwisely, he pays the price for it, but it is his life. This does not mean that he does not need the services of the law school. He probably will become friends with the professors and will discuss legal matters with them and socialize with them. From some he will seek counsel and advice concerning personal matters. More and more he will come to be treated as a colleague. Not so the "patient". What does he know of drugs and medications? Some of the centers represented at the Little Rock conference were shocked that we at the Iowa Commission for the Blind "socialize" with our students and have them to our homes. They believed that this threatened what they took to be the "professional relationship".

Our society has so steeped itself in false notions concerning blindness that it is most difficult for people to understand the concept of blindness as a characteristic and for them to understand the services needed by the blind. As a matter of fact, in one way or another, the whole point of all I have been saying is just this: blindness is neither a dying nor a psychological crippling—it need not cause a disintegration of

personality—and the stereotype which underlies this view is no less destructive when it presents itself in the garb of modern science than it was when it appeared in the ancient raiment of superstition and witchcraft.

Throughout the world, but especially in this country, we are today in the midst of a vast transition with respect to our attitudes about blindness and the whole concept of what handicaps are. We are reassessing and reshaping our ideas. In this process the professionals in the field cannot play a lone hand. It is a cardinal principle of our free society that the citizen public will hold the

balance of decision. In my opinion, it is fortunate that this is so, for professionals can become limited in their thinking and committed to outworn programs and ideas. The general public must be the balance staff, the ultimate weigher of values and setter of standards. In order that the public may perform this function with reason and wisdom, it is the duty of each of us to see that the new ideas receive the broadest possible dissemination. But even more important, we must examine ourselves to see that our own minds are free from prejudice and preconception.

BLINDNESS—A LEFT-HANDED DISSERTATION

by *Kenneth Jernigan*

Everyone is familiar with the “revolution of rising expectations” which has raised the consciousness of deprived and dependent populations the world over during the generation since World War II. Abroad this trend has taken the form of independence movements, the rise of new nations, and the decline of the old colonial empires. Within the United States it has found famous expression in the civil rights movement of the “black-brown-red-yellow” revolt; the feminist movement, known as women’s liberation; the aggressive youth counter-culture of the sixties; and a variety of other self-assertive and self-directing mobilizations—such as those of the poor, the aged, and the sexually deviant.

Whatever their ultimate validity or vitality, most of these domestic movements and causes have been attended with considerable fanfare and commotion. They have

captured the imagination and stirred the understanding of the general public. Not so with the blind. It is not that we have lacked sympathy or goodwill or widespread support. We have had plenty of that. Rather, it is that we have not (in present day parlance) been perceived as a minority. Yet, that is exactly what we are—a minority, with all that the term implies.

As with other minorities, we contend with an “establishment,” which tries to put us down and keep us out and which denies that we even exist as a legitimate and cohesive group—with common problems, common aspirations, and common interests. Not only is our “establishment” composed of the general sighted public but, more particularly, of the network of governmental and private social service agencies specifically created to give us aid. Principal among these repressive agencies are the

American Foundation for the Blind and the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped (NAC).

We have organized to take concerted action. In fact, the National Federation of the Blind (established in 1940) predates most of the activist groups of today. We, too, have our Uncle Toms. We have tokenism; we have efforts to divide and conquer; we have attempts to buy off the troublemakers; we have threats and intimidations; we have professional-sounding studies and reports; we have impressive meetings and conferences; we have talk about positive and constructive action; we have the force and prestige of tradition and custom; and we have a hundred other delays and obstacles.

But underlying all of these things (and far more complex) are our own problems of self-awareness and the need for public education and public understanding. We of the National Federation of the Blind, for instance, affirm that the ordinary blind person can compete on terms of equality with the ordinary sighted person, if he gets proper training and opportunity. We know that the average blind person can do the average job in the average place of business, and do it as well as his sighted neighbor. In other words the blind person can be as happy and lead as full a life as anybody else.

Even so, blindness has its problems. Properly understood and dealt with, it need not be the major tragedy which it has always been considered. It can be reduced to the level of a mere physical nuisance, but it cannot be reduced below that point. Even if we were to contend (and we don't contend it, as I will shortly indicate) that there is absolutely nothing which can be done with sight which cannot be done just as easily and just as well without it, blindness would still be a nuisance, as the world

is now constituted. Why? Because the world is planned and structured for the sighted. This does not mean that blindness need be a terrible tragedy or that the blind are inferior or that they cannot compete on terms of equality with the sighted.

For an exact analogy, consider the situation of those who are left-handed. The world is planned and structured for the right-handed. Thus, left-handedness is a nuisance and is recognized as such, especially by the left-handed. Even so, the left-handed can compete on terms of equality with the right-handed since their handicap can be reduced to the level of a mere physical nuisance.

If you are not left-handed (I am not. I am a "normal."), you may not have thought of the problems. A left-handed person ordinarily wears his wristwatch on his right arm. Not to do so is awkward and causes problems. But the watch is made for the right-handed. Therefore, when it is worn on the right arm, the stem is toward the elbow, not the fingers. The watch is inconvenient to wind, a veritable nuisance.

Then there are butter knives. Many of them are so constructed that the left-handed must either spread the butter with the back of the knife, awkwardly use the right hand, or turn the wrist in a most uncomfortable way—nuisances all. But not of the sort to ruin one's psyche or cause nightmares, just annoying. The garden variety can opener (the one you grip in your left hand and turn with your right—that is, if you are "normal") is made for "normals." If you hold it in your right hand and turn it with your left (as any respectable left-hander is tempted to do), you must either clumsily reach across it to get at the handle or turn it upside down so that the handle is conveniently located, in which case it won't work at all. Likewise, steak knives are usually serrated to favor the right-handed. Scissors, egg beaters, ice cream

dippers, and other utensils are also made for the same group.

So are ordinary school-desk classroom chairs. How many have you seen with the arms on the left side? Of course, a few enlightened schools and colleges (with proper, present-day concern for the well-being of minorities) have two or three left-handed chairs in each of their classrooms, but this is the exception rather than the rule. It succeeds only in earning the ill will of chauvinist right-handers, who must use the desks when the room is full and the left-handed are absent. Of course, these occasional left-handed desks are the most blatant form of tokenism, the groveling gratitude of occasional left-handed Uncle Toms to the contrary notwithstanding.

In at least one case, it would seem, the problem of the left-handed is not just a side effect of the fact that the world is constructed for the right-handed but a real, inherent weakness. When the left-handed person writes with ink (the ballpoint pen was a blessing, indeed), his hand tends to smear the ink as it drags over what he has written. Of course, he can hold his hand up as he writes, but this is an inferior technique, not to mention being tiresome. Upon closer examination even this apparently inherent weakness is not really inherent at all but simply another problem created by society in its catering to the right-handed. There is no real reason why it is better to begin reading or writing at the left side of the page and move to the right, except that it is more efficient and comfortable for the majority, the right-handed. In fact, it would be just as easy to read or write from the right to the left (more so for the left-handed), and thus the shoe would be on the other foot—or, more precisely, the pen would be in the other hand.

The left-handed have always been considered inferior by the right-handed.

Formerly (in primitive times—twenty or thirty years ago) parents tried to make their left-handed children behave normally—that is, use their right hands. Thereby, they often created trauma and psychiatric problems—causing complexes, psychoses, and emotional disturbances. Today (in the age of enlightenment) while parents do not exactly say, “left is beautiful,” they recognize the rights of minorities and leave their left-handed progeny to do their own thing.

(Parenthetically, I might say here that those who work with the blind are not always so progressive. Parents—and especially educators—still try to make the blind child with a little sight read large type, even when Braille would serve him better and be more efficient. They put great stress on reading in the “normal” manner and not being “conspicuous.” They make him ashamed of his blindness and often cause permanent damage.)

But back to the left-handed. Regardless of the enlightenment of parents and teachers, the ancient myth of the inferiority of the left-handed still lingers to bedevil the lives of that unfortunate minority. To say that someone has given you a “left-handed compliment” is not a compliment to the left-handed. It is usually the left hand that doesn’t know what the right hand is doing, rarely the other way around; and it is the right hand that is raised, or placed on the Bible, to take an oath. Salutes and the Pledge of Allegiance are given with the right hand. Divine Scripture tells us that the good and the evil shall be divided and that, at the day of final Judgment, the sheep shall be on the right hand and the goats on the left, from whence they shall be cast into hell and outer darkness forever and ever. The guest of honor sits on the right hand of the host, and in an argument one always wants to be *right*. No one ever wants to be *left* behind. Whether these uses of the words “left” and “right”

are subtleties of language—reinforcing the stereotype and bespeaking deeply ingrained, subconscious prejudice—or whether they are accidental, as the “normals” allege, who can say? It may simply be that the left-handed are supersensitive, wearing chips on their shoulders and looking for insult where none is intended.

It is hard to make this case, however, when one considers the word *gauche*. The 1971 edition of *Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language, Unabridged*, says: “*gauche* . . . left, on the left, French . . . lacking in social graces or ease, tact, and familiarity with polite usage; likely or inclined to commit social blunders especially from lack of experience or training . . . lacking finish or exhibiting crudity (as of style, form, or technique) . . . being or designed for use with the left hand: LEFT-HANDED. *Synonym* see AWKWARD. *gauchely*, *adverb*: in a gauche manner: AWKWARDLY, CLUMSILY, CRUDELY.”

Whatever else may be said, there is nothing subtle about all of that; nor is there anything subtle about the term “bar sinister,” which comes from the Latin *sinistral*, meaning left-handed. The 1971 edition of *Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language, Unabridged*, says: “*bar sinister* . . . the fact or condition of being of illegitimate birth . . . an enduring stigma, stain, or reproach (as of improper conduct or irregular status).” Supersensitive? Quibbling? Not on your life. Left-handers arise. You have nothing to lose but your chains. They probably don't fit you anyway, being made for the right-handed. Look for the new slogans any day: “Left is lovely,” and “Get righty!”

As with other oppressed minorities, the subtleties of language and prejudice carry over into the job market. I know of a girl, for instance, who lives in Kansas and who

sought employment in a factory in that state. She was interviewed and passed every test with flying colors. The prospective employer terminated the interview by telling her, “You are in every way qualified for the job, and I would hire you immediately, except for your handicap.” In outrage and indignation she demanded to know what he meant. “Why,” he said, “it's obvious! You are left-handed. The machines on our assembly line are made for the right-handed. You would slow down the entire operation.” This is not fantasy but fact. The company makes greeting cards. The girl did not get the job.

If, in truth and in fact, the left-handed girl would have slowed the assembly line, it is hard to see how the action of the employer can be called discriminatory. He could not be expected to buy new machinery simply to give her a job, nor could he be expected to redesign the entire factory. The “normal” person is right-handed, and it is reasonable for the factory to be designed accordingly.

Or does all of this miss the whole point? Is this not exactly the way employers and the general public think and talk about the blind? How did the employer know that the girl would slow down the assembly line? How did he know she was less efficient? Perhaps she had alternative techniques. Perhaps, in fact, she could have done the job better than most of the other people he had on the line. He decided (based on what he doubtless called “obvious” and “common sense” reasons) that she couldn't do the work. Accordingly, she was never even given the opportunity to try. Beware the “obvious,” and look very carefully at so-called “common sense.”

Do you still say there is no discrimination against the left-handed? Probably you do—unless you begin to think about it, unless you get the facts—and even then,

some people will say you are quibbling, that you are exaggerating. How very like the case of the blind. How easy to make quick judgments and have all of the answers, especially when you are not confronted with the problem or compelled to look at reality.

From all of this, you can see that the life of the left-hander is not easy. Nevertheless, his infirmity can be reduced to the level of a mere nuisance. It need not mean helplessness or inferiority. It does not necessarily cripple him psychologically. With reasonable opportunity he can compete on terms of equality with his right-handed neighbor. The average left-hander can do the average job in the average place of business and do it as well as the average right-hander.

So far as I can tell, there is no inherent weakness in left-handedness at all. The problems arise from the fact that society is structured for the right-handed. But these problems (annoying though they be) do not keep the left-handed from leading normal lives or competing with others. They are at the nuisance level.

Therefore, even if blindness (like left-handedness) had no inherent problems, it would still be a nuisance since society is structured and planned for the sighted—sometimes when it could be arranged more efficiently otherwise. For instance, most windows in modern buildings are not there for ventilation. They are sealed. They are there only so that the sighted may look out of them. The building loses heat in winter and coolness in summer, but the sighted (the majority) will have their windows.

I think, however, that blindness is not exactly like left-handedness. I think there are some things that are inherently easier to do with sight than without it. For instance, you can glance down the street and see who is coming. You can look across a crowded room and tell who is there.

But here, it seems to me, most people go astray. They assume that, because you cannot look across the room and see who is there or enjoy a sunset or look down the street and recognize a friend, you are confronted with a major tragedy—that you are psychologically crippled, sociologically inferior, and economically unable to compete. Regardless of the words they use, they feel (deep down at the gut level) that the blind are necessarily less fortunate than the sighted. They think that blindness means lack of ability. Such views are held not only by most of the sighted but by many of the blind as well. They are also held by many, if not most, of the professionals in the field of work with the blind. In the *Journal of Rehabilitation* for January-February 1966, an article appeared entitled: "Social Isolation of the Blind: An Underrated Aspect of Disability and Dependency." This article was written by none other than Dr. D. C. MacFarland, Chief of the Office for the Blind, Social and Rehabilitative Service, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Dr. MacFarland says:

"Let me repeat a statement which I violently oppose. There is a slowly evolving fiction which can be summed up in the generalization, 'Blindness is a mere inconvenience.' I do not agree with this, and I do not know what to call such exaggeration in reverse. I think it has done its share of harm, throwing some very well-intentioned people off the track about what blindness really amounts to in people's lives."

It seems to me that Dr. MacFarland is as far off the track as the person who would contend that blindness is not even important enough to be considered a nuisance. I think it would be pleasant to look at a sunset. I think it would be helpful to look across a room and see who is there, or glance down the street and recognize a friend. But I know that these things are

peripheral to the major concerns of life. It is true that it is sometimes a nuisance to devise alternative techniques to get the same results I could have without effort if I were sighted, but it is just that (a nuisance), not a tragedy or a psychological crisis or an international incident.

It seems to me that many of the problems which are regarded as inherent in blindness are more like those of the left-handed—in other words, created as a natural side effect of the structuring of society for the sighted. It seems to me that the remaining problems (those that are truly indigenous to blindness) are usually vastly overrated and overdramatized.

Blindness can, indeed, be a tragedy and a veritable hell, but this is not because of the blindness or anything inherent in it. It is because of what people have thought about blindness and because of the deprivations and the denials which result. It is because of the destructive myths which have existed from the time of the caveman—myths which have equated eyesight with ability, and light with intelligence and purity. It is because the blind, being part of the general culture, have tended to accept the public attitudes and thus have done much to make those attitudes reality.

As far as I am concerned, all that I have been saying is tied up with the why and wherefore of the National Federation of the Blind. If our principal problem is the physical fact of blindness, I think there is little purpose in organizing. However, the

real problem is not the blindness but the mistaken attitudes about it. These attitudes can be changed, and we are changing them. The sighted can also change. They can be shown that we are in no way inferior to them and that the old ideas were wrong—that we are able to compete with the sighted, play with the sighted, work with the sighted, and live with the sighted on terms of complete equality. We the blind can also come to recognize these truths, and we can live by them.

For all these reasons I say to you that the blind are able to compete on terms of absolute equality with the sighted, but I go on to say that blindness (even when properly dealt with) is still a physical nuisance. We must avoid the sin and the fallacy of either extreme. Blindness need not be a tragic hell. It cannot be a total nullity, lacking all inconvenience. It can, as we of the National Federation of the Blind say at every opportunity, be reduced to the level of a mere annoyance. Right on! We the blind must neither cop out by selling ourselves short with self-pity and myths of tragic deprivation, nor lie to ourselves by denying the existence of a problem. We need your help; we seek your understanding; and we want your partnership in changing our status in society. There is no place in our movement for the philosophy of the self-effacing Uncle Tom, but there is also no place for unreasonable and unrealistic belligerence. We are not out to “get sighty.” Will you work with us?

MARY ELLEN REIHING JOINS THE STAFF
AT THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR THE BLIND

by *Kenneth Jernigan*

When Ramona Walhof went to Idaho in October of this year to become Director of the State Commission for the Blind, it was necessary to find another person to fill the position of Assistant Director of Job Opportunities for the Blind (JOB). That person is Mary Ellen Reihing. At the time of this writing (early November) she is on the job and working. By background, temperament, and training she is eminently qualified for the position.

I have known Miss Reihing since the early 1970's. She was a member of the "First Seminar," which occurred during the Labor Day weekend of 1973. Seminars are a very intense experience, and I get to know the people who attend quite well—in fact, extremely well. I liked what I found in Mary Ellen Reihing, and the years have confirmed the judgment.

But Mary Ellen Reihing was not always a Federationist. Far from it. Like most of us, she began by believing most of the stereotypes about blindness. Let her tell it in her own words:

"I was born in Toledo, Ohio, in 1952. I am the third of five children—two older brothers and a younger brother and sister. My parents were leaders in the wave of groups and organizations of parents of blind children that began pushing for public school education in the 1950's. I attended Toledo public schools through

eighth grade, but I graduated from a Catholic girls' high school.

"I grew up thinking that the way for me to succeed was to put as much distance as possible between me and other blind people. I went to the Toledo Society for the Blind summer camp and to some of their 'Family Night' socials. I knew that the blind adults there were treated like children, and I also knew that I did not want that to happen to me when I grew up. I thought the way to escape was to get people to forget that I was blind. In fact, I can remember that, in the first quarter of college, I told two other blind students that, though I liked them very much, I thought it was a bad idea for us to be seen together in public. The truly pathetic thing about this is that they agreed with me.

"Not until I was a senior in high school did I begin to get the first glimmerings of the fact that we the blind are (in every modern sense of that term) a minority and that our problems are not blindness but public attitudes. I had spent the last three years of high school devotedly participating in Junior Achievement. Junior Achievement is a program to teach high school students about business by setting up miniature corporations—which the students manage themselves, from incorporation to liquidation. Students compete for awards and recognition. The ultimate compliment for an Achiever is to attend the National

Junior Achievement Conference, which is held for one week during the summer each year on a college campus.

"In my senior year I became Executive Vice President of my corporation and was chosen Executive Vice President of the year for Northwestern Ohio. I still have the trophy—but I did not make the trip to the conference. The conference officials told me that I would be required to bring my mother with me and stay in a motel instead of living (unaccompanied) on the campus like the other students. I was not willing to go under those conditions—not willing to endure the humiliation; but I had not yet learned what we have to do to achieve first-class citizenship and stand up for our rights. I wrote a timid little letter, saying that (if I were permitted to come on the same terms as others) I would try hard not to have an accident or get sick and die—and that even if I did, my parents would not sue. I would not behave that way today. We learn.

"But as a senior in high school I had not yet come to understand. I had never heard of the National Federation of the Blind, so I went to the only place I knew for help. My dad sat down with the Chairman of the Board of the Toledo Society for the Blind and laid out the whole story. Not only was the man the Chairman of the Board of the Society—he also provided all of the subcontracts for the sheltered shop. In addition, his business sponsored Junior Achievement Companies. We thought he could (and would) bring pressure to bear. How differently I would view it today. The only result was a little article in the Toledo Society for the Blind newsletter saying that I had won the contest and that my parents should be proud of me.

"A year later I told the story to Dewey Cummings, who was not only my rehabilitation counselor but also a staunch member of the National Federation of the Blind. He

began to talk to me about the NFB. But I didn't pay much attention until the *Monitor* began mysteriously arriving at my college dorm. At that time I was championing every liberal cause that came along—every cause, that is, except the one I should have been championing. I didn't want to get involved with blind people as a cause. For one thing, way down at the emotional level I didn't really believe that blind people were capable, either of self-organization or equal participation. However, the more I read the more I realized that morally I could not duck my responsibility to get involved. Therefore, when my mother told me that some blind people had called about a local meeting of the Federation, I gritted my teeth and reluctantly went.

"I shall never forget my shock. I heard Helen Johnson, a delightful lady whom I had always associated with parties but not with serious matters, explaining the provisions of the Social Security Act more clearly than some of my college professors. Then, there was a long discussion about whether or not we should try to get free bus service for blind people. The group voted it down. That was the first time I had ever seen any group associated with the blind voting on anything—much less voting to turn down a freeby.

"That was the night that I realized how wrong I had been about what it means to be blind. I decided that the best thing I could do was first to put my own attitudinal house in order and then spread the word to others. I became an active member of the Student Chapter of the NFB of Ohio. By the time I graduated from college the membership in the Student Chapter had reached thirty-five and was climbing.

"But my awakening to reality and my understanding were not things that came in a day or a week—or, for that matter, in a month or a year. My first national conven-

tion was Chicago in 1972. During that convention I heard a lot about exploitation of blind people in sheltered shops. I only half believed it. I was still a victim of the stereotypes about blindness and of the conditioning I had received. In the back of my mind (perhaps not at the conscious level) I thought that people who worked in those places somehow deserved what they got. They must, I thought, be slow or incompetent. If they were really normal people, why would they allow themselves to be treated like pitiable children? I had read enough of our philosophy to believe that things should not be the way they were in the shops, but I could not personalize it and feel it emotionally. I now realize that at that time I still thought I was not like other blind people—that my education would insulate me from the kind of treatment I was reading about. Besides, I wasn't sure that things were really all that bad.

"So, when I didn't find a summer job I went down to the Toledo Society for the Blind and started to work in the sheltered shop. When they told me I would only be guaranteed 88 cents an hour, I was furious. I was assigned to making boxes. They were small boxes for packing muffler clamps for cars. I would open the boxes up and pass them down the line, and the next person would insert the clamp. Then the boxes were closed and packed in lots of fifty. Naturally, the line worked only as fast as the slowest person. In the beginning I was that person. Let me hasten to add that I doubt that the line went any slower than it would if it had consisted of average *sighted* workers.

"One man decided to speed up our line by helping me make boxes. I said, 'Thank you, sir,' and everybody laughed.

" 'That's not a sir,' they said. 'That's just Fuzzy!' Fuzzy made 10,000 boxes a day for his line, and he found time to help me with my boxes, too—but they said he was

'multiply handicapped.' He was slightly retarded, and he had a speech impediment; but he was quick with his hands, and he turned out the work. Nevertheless, the federal law (because he was blind) allowed the shop to exploit him and pay him less than the minimum wage.

"One day I was working with several other young women. One of them was the sighted daughter of the foreman. She kept telling me that if I would go faster, I might make the minimum wage. Of course, since she was sighted, she was *guaranteed* the minimum wage, regardless of whether she produced or not. At the end of the day's work a shop official came by and gave all of us on the line enough money to buy a bottle of soda pop—because, as he put it, our 'production was so good.' I gave the money back to him and said I would rather see it in my pay envelope. I learned about sheltered shops the hard way—but I learned.

"On my last day at the shop, one of the women I had worked with most of the summer told me that, though she liked me and had enjoyed working with me, she hoped I would go to school and get a job so that I would never come back. My friend Fuzzy said, 'Oh, she'll be back. They always come back.' Yes, I learned about the sheltered shops. It is a lesson I will never forget.

"College went well for me. I was a volunteer for 'Crisis Phone,' a telephone semicounseling service. I was in Mortar Board and was chosen for *Who's Who Among Students in Colleges and Universities of America* and Phi Kappa Phi. As I went through college, I became increasingly active in the Federation. I was NFB national Student Division Secretary from 1973 to 1975, President of the Ohio Student Chapter during my senior year, and First Vice President of the NFB of Ohio in 1974.

"My first job after college was an educa-

tion in itself. I was a staff aid for a sheltered shop for the retarded. The fourteen people with whom I worked should probably not have been in a sheltered shop at all but in a Living Skills training program. We mostly just kept them busy, and their so-called 'pay' was appalling. They were called 'clients.' I liked many of them better than some of the staff.

"In 1975 I went to Nebraska. My work with State Services for the Blind was challenging and fun. I was in charge of developing services for older blind people. That meant making contacts with community groups and with the Commission on Aging. I traveled the Eastern third of the state, putting on in-service training for nursing homes and giving talks to senior dinners, card clubs, and anyone else who would listen. I also talked with a lot of people who were losing their sight, and I did some home teaching. Later, I got involved with deaf-blind services. I dealt with deaf-blind people and with the state education agency for deaf-blind children. I also found time to become active in the Lincoln Toastmistress Club.

"In June of 1979 I left the agency. I wanted to have a job experience outside of work with the blind and outside of social services of any kind. I started by going back to graduate school to get a master's in administration. In the meantime I was on

the lookout for opportunity.

"The opportunity came. I moved to Chicago on February 2, 1980, to become a Special Assistant to George Ryan, speaker of the Illinois House of Representatives. I dealt with constituent problems and questions. I did research to get background information on the action of state agencies. I represented Speaker Ryan at meetings, gathered data for him, and presented to the public his position on issues. It was valuable experience and a new dimension to my education. As I write this (the day after election) it would appear that my former boss (with whom I parted on good terms) will be the Lieutenant Governor of Illinois for the next four years. In Illinois I became a member of the board of *Dialogue Magazine*, a position which I still hold; and I was active in the Business and Professional Women's Club.

"When I received the offer to come to Baltimore and work in the National Office of the Federation, I accepted immediately. In a way I feel that my entire background and experience have pointed toward what I am now doing. I feel honored and pleased and challenged (and a dozen other things)—but of one thing you may be certain: I shall give to this job everything that I possess in the way of ability and devotion and just plain hard work."

BLIND VENDORS WIN NEW RIGHTS:

REPORT FROM ALASKA

It is said that before the Second World War Winston Churchill sat in the British Parliament and watched the great clock on the wall tick away the minutes and the

hours while England refused to prepare or believe. When the awakening finally came, it was almost too late. Thus, it is with the vendors of the United States. Many have

still not joined the National Federation of the Blind. Some are members of the so-called "Randolph-Sheppard Vendors of America," the weak and powerless affiliate of the American Council of the Blind—an organization which is almost completely controlled by the most custodial of the governmental and private agencies. Large numbers of the vendors belong to no organization at all, indicating by their actions (and often by their words as well) that they believe they have nothing in common with other blind people and no reason to participate in the organized blind movement. They seem unaware of the threats to the program that provides their livelihood—almost as if they do not understand the realities of the world in which we live.

Yet, the great clock on the wall ticks on, and the National Federation of the Blind fights the battle to save the vending program—in Tennessee, Georgia, Idaho, Nevada, Alaska, and everywhere else in the country. However, if more of the vendors do not begin to understand and participate, the future of the Randolph-Sheppard program (and, therefore, their chance to make a good living) is desperately uncertain.

Fortunately it is not yet too late. Increasing numbers of the vendors are coming into the Federation and adding their strength to the movement. Recent occurrences in Alaska offer a striking example of the necessity. To those who say that we should combine forces with the agencies (for after all we are all working for the same thing), the Alaska experience is both a reminder and a warning. It is true that there are good agencies, but it is also true that there are many of the other sort. It is equally true that our interests are not always necessarily the same as those of the agencies established to give us service. Here is a case in point:

The 12th Session of the Alaska State

Legislature resulted in a great victory for the blind of the state and proved again the value of organizing for common action. The issue was a bill to expand Alaska's blind vendor program and to require that it conform in all respects to the federal Randolph-Sheppard Act. On the surface, this might seem to be a fairly simple and noncontroversial item. And so it should have been, except that Alaska state rehabilitation officials bitterly opposed the bill because it provided for more vendor rights and less discretion by the agency.

The 1974 amendments to the Randolph-Sheppard Act require each state to have an elected Committee of Blind Vendors "to participate with" the state agency for the blind in fulfilling various management responsibilities. This is a mechanism for involving the vendors, as a group, in making policy decisions which affect them. Another feature of the 1974 amendments is arbitration of blind vendor grievances that are not resolved through state agency hearings.

As has proven to be the case with many state agencies, the Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation was less than enthusiastic about these new requirements in the federal law. One tactic was to keep the vendors in the dark about them. This worked as intended by the agency for several years. But in the fall of 1981, after several discussions with Federation leaders at state and national conventions, the blind vendors of Alaska began to assert their rights. Quickly, the agency mood turned from benevolence to ugliness.

The first confrontation came with an attempt to negotiate the terms of the state's rules and regulations for the vending facility program. These had not yet been approved, as required by the Rehabilitation Services Administration in Washington. The negotiations were to involve participants from the Committee of Blind Vendors and

the agency, with the objective of reaching an agreement which could be shared with other vendors and agency personnel for approval. The procedure was to be similar to that used in Tennessee (see the *Braille Monitor*, November, 1980 and June, 1981). But the Alaska agency was not prepared to work constructively with the vendors. The negotiations broke down, the agency director (Michael Morgan) threatening to separate the state and federal programs and to abolish the Blind Vendors Committee except for a token committee of two vendors on federal property.

The course of the ill-fated negotiations and the terms of the agency's nonnegotiable demands were described in the following report to all members of the State Committee of Blind Vendors from Donald Lutz, Chairman of the Committee of Blind Vendors:

State Committee of Blind Vendors
Anchorage, Alaska

TO: All Members of the State Committee of Blind Vendors
FROM: Donald Lutz, President
DATE: September 24, 1981

Following the annual meeting of the State Committee of Blind Vendors in Juneau, Alaska, on September 2, 1981, I was informed that representatives of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Attorney General's Office would be willing to meet with representatives of the State Committee of Blind Vendors to discuss DVR's latest proposed regulations, and to attempt to negotiate a resolution of the objections which we might have to their draft proposal.

Accordingly, I appointed a Subcommittee, consisting of myself and Chuck Shortridge, to meet with James Gashel, National Federation of the Blind National

Office, and counsel, to prepare an analysis of the proposed draft regulations, and prepare for a negotiating session. A copy of the Division's draft is attached for your information, as well as a copy of our response.

On September 23, 1981, the Subcommittee, Mr. Gashel, and Anne Marie Falvey, our attorney, met with Assistant Attorney General Bruce Botelho, Theda Mason-Smith, and Kurt Thorson. Before discussing the language of our revised regulations, we sought from them a commitment that these negotiations would be entered into in good faith, and that the result would be recommended by both the Division representatives and the Committee members to their respective bodies. We also sought a commitment that the Division would present the negotiated agreement as its proposed draft regulations.

Despite the fact that the DVR team supposedly came ready to negotiate, they could not promise that the result would be given any weight until they consulted with Mike Morgan. We adjourned the first session with their promise to contact him and let us know if he would permit the negotiations to proceed on the basis that our final result would be accepted by both sides and proposed for adoption.

The negotiation session re-convened the next morning, at which time we were assured that Mike Morgan agreed to the commitment, that negotiations would be conducted in good faith, and that the document we finally agreed upon would be recommended by both sides to the Director, the entire State Committee, and the Commissioner of Education. Areas which remained in dispute would be identified and presented to the Commissioner to be resolved.

Encouraged by the promise that our effort would be taken seriously, we proceeded to the first section of the

proposed rules. We felt that this first section was crucial to our interests, since the state's proposal weakened our rights under the Randolph-Sheppard Act, and in fact, we are convinced, violated the Act, while our proposal attempted to follow the language and purpose of the Act. Far from being in a position to negotiate, the state representatives revealed that they were unable to proceed in any substantive fashion without recessing the sessions so they could consult with Mike Morgan.

Our fundamental objection was to the state proposal to establish two vending programs, a federal and a state program, and operate them more or less together, but to deny participants in the state program the benefits they are guaranteed under the federal Randolph-Sheppard Act. We took the position that the only regulations we were interested in drafting were Randolph-Sheppard regulations, as applied to federal, state and private property in the state of Alaska. We recognized the right of the state to operate any program it chose for any handicapped people in Alaska, including a state vending program, but demanded that all blind people remain protected by the rights under the Randolph-Sheppard Act.

After recessing to discuss our position with Mike Morgan, the state representatives informed us that they would continue to negotiate, but only on the following basis:

There would be two completely separate vending programs: one on federal property governed by Randolph-Sheppard, and one on state property governed solely by state regulations. No blind vendor on state property would be allowed to participate as a Randolph-Sheppard blind vendor, and the state program would be open to any handicapped person, as well as the blind.

Further, they demanded three "pre-conditions" to continuing negotiations on the basis which they defined. Those were:

1. There would be no state Committee within the state-operated vending program;

2. No vending machine income derived from state property would be available for the benefit of vendors on federal property; and

3. Negotiations would not continue until the entire state Committee, at a specially convened meeting, had been informed of the conditions of negotiation, of the intent to establish a dual program, and had voted to allow negotiations to proceed. Further, they demanded that the Committee not be allowed to vote until DVR had an opportunity to appear (in person or by phone) and explain its position to the Committee.

We found that these demands threatened to destroy the entire Randolph-Sheppard program in Alaska. In effect, they stripped one-half of the Committee of its right to membership, and revoked the rights and protections granted to all state vendors under the federal law.

Even more important, these demands threatened our right to operate our stands as independent businessmen. They subjected us to virtually total control by the Division, without any protection such as we have through our Committee under the Randolph-Sheppard Act. Therefore, at that point, we declared that negotiations had broken down with no hope of reaching any agreement, and we categorically refused to accept the Division's demands.

It was obvious to us that the DVR team had been instructed by Mike Morgan, during their consultations, to take this threatening line with us. It was also obvious that even though the DVR team had met with us willingly, and believed they would be allowed to negotiate in good faith, they soon were made aware that all agreements would have to be cleared through Mike Morgan, which made it impossible to accomplish anything.

I believe that it is now necessary for the

Committee to evaluate our position, if the state's attitude represents our future as blind vendors. We must consider very seriously what steps we might take to protect our program, our stands, and our right to earn our own living. For this reason I have called a special meeting to be held by phone on September 25, 1981, at which time we should be prepared to adopt a course of action.

Donald E. Lutz,
President

This was the memorandum from Federationist Don Lutz. It was followed by decisive action. Publicizing Morgan's illegal behavior was the first step taken by the Committee with full Federation backing. On the morning of September 25, 1981, Sandy Sanderson, President of the NFB of Alaska, and James Gashel, Director of Governmental Affairs from the National Office, went on local television in Anchorage to tell the story of the state agency's illegal attempt to dominate and control blind vendors. Then, the following press release was issued:

**September 25, 1981
For Immediate Release**

A State Committee, representing blind people who operate vending stands in public buildings in Alaska has charged that Michael Morgan, the Director of the Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, is "deliberately destroying" their business opportunities. Morgan's agency has been chosen by the federal government to manage the program in Alaska which allows blind people to have small business establishments in public buildings, but the blind say that Morgan is jeopardizing the entire program by "knowingly failing to comply with the clear requirements of the federal law."

The law cited by the blind representatives is known as the Randolph-Sheppard Act, which Congress passed for the purpose of expanding employment opportunities for the blind. Among other things, the law requires cooperation by State Agencies such as Morgan's, which are expected to work with the federal government to increase business opportunities for the blind. But the blind say that Morgan is failing to cooperate with the federal government and have asked officials in Washington to withdraw federal backing of Morgan's agency.

Donald Lutz, President of the Alaska Committee of Blind Vendors, described Morgan's failure to follow the federal law as "cruel disregard for the rights and needs of the blind." "Morgan has decided that the blind of Alaska should not have the same opportunity to be self-supporting which is extended to blind people in every other state," Lutz said.

Sandy Sanderson, President of the National Federation of the Blind of Alaska, also criticized Morgan's conduct, observing that "70% of employable blind people are either unemployed or substantially underemployed. The problem is lack of opportunity to work, yet Morgan is setting the blind of our State back 45 years by denying us the help we need to support ourselves. Morgan is on some sort of an ego trip. He is sacrificing the blind of Alaska because he does not want to obey the mandates of a federal law enacted by Congress. I cannot believe that Governor Hammond and other high state officials in Juneau are behind this," Sanderson said. The group which Sanderson represents is the only organization of blind people in Alaska and is an affiliate of the 50,000 member National Federation of the Blind.

Sanderson and Lutz hope to salvage the vending program for the blind by appealing to higher state officials, including Governor

Hammond. They point out that 4,000 blind people, nationwide, are provided with business opportunities under the Randolph-Sheppard Act, but only 4 blind people are benefiting from the program under Morgan's control in Alaska. Sanderson and Lutz say this is because Morgan has "launched a vendetta" against the blind program which has been so successful in other states.

Publicity, of course, was only a small part of the long-range strategy for the Committee to win its rights and protect the rights of all present and future blind vendors in Alaska. Above all, we realized that if Michael Morgan could get approval from Washington for his plans to separate the state and federal programs and to have both blind and severely handicapped vendors in a "state only" program, other states might try the same technique. This would have to be resisted. It was.

On February 15, 1982, state Senator Bill Bradley, from Anchorage, introduced Senate Bill 778 in the 12th Legislature for the State of Alaska. The bill was designed to establish a uniform state and federal blind vending program in Alaska and to expand the number and type of business opportunities. Also included were strong provisions for active participation in policy making by the State Committee of Blind Vendors. Just for good measure, we threw in, as well, a priority for blind vendors to manage snack bars on board vessels operated by the Alaska State Marine Ferry System. The bill was referred to the State Affairs Committee, where it sat idle until mid-March. At this point, we swung into action.

The Alaska legislature meets each year in Juneau, the state capitol. This is also the site of the headquarters for Michael Morgan and the State Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. But Juneau is approximate-

ly 1,000 miles away from almost anything or anyone else in the state. So, if you intend to pass a bill in the Alaska legislature, you have to pack up and move to Juneau. This is exactly what Donald Lutz, Wanda Issel, and Louise Rude did. Don and Wanda are vendors in Anchorage. Louise is the veteran of many previously successful legislative campaigns. Sandy Sanderson and Jim Gashel also made periodic trips to Juneau as the weeks of the legislature rolled by.

In April, 1982, Senate Bill 778 passed the State Senate. In the process of achieving this victory, however, we had to accept many weakening amendments. These were calculated by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to allow for the separation of the programs as described earlier. Also, the amendments called for vending facilities on state and other public property to be assigned to handicapped persons other than the blind. It appeared that the priority for blind vendors would be threatened.

When the bill got to the House of Representatives, however, we redoubled our efforts and fortified ourselves with some new amendments, designed again to make the bill an effective instrument for guaranteeing vendors' rights. Hearings were held, and there were many delays. But, when the final vote was taken in May, we had achieved our major objectives. Senate Bill 778 became law. Among other things, that law settles the question of which rules (state or federal) control the program for blind vendors in Alaska.

Section 3 of the new law establishes the State Committee of Blind Vendors (including all vendors on state and federal property in Alaska). Furthermore, the Committee is given authority for active participation with the state agency as required under the federal Randolph-Sheppard Act. Section 8 of the new law defines "active participation," as "a process through which the

Committee of Blind Vendors or a licensee is provided the opportunity to exert a major influence in program policies, standards, and procedures affecting the operation of vending facilities, with the Commissioner of Education having final responsibility." This is not exactly the language we originally proposed. It is, however, far better than the Michael Morgan form of ignoring the Committee or trying to split it up through illegal maneuvers. No wonder he mounted such furious opposition to the bill.

Having achieved this victory, the Alaska vendors and the Federation, together, are embarking upon a new course of relations with the state agency. We have shown that we will not be pushed around whenever it comes to a question of our basic rights. This is the strength of Federationism and the value of the organized blind movement at work. Often in the past, Michael Morgan has written the song, and the blind of Alaska have had to dance to his tune. But, now, the song is our song, and we have changed the music.

THE ZAMBIA PROJECT FOR INDEPENDENCE OF THE BLIND

At the convention of the National Federation of the Blind in Minneapolis last July a report was given concerning the Zambia project for independence of the blind. Mr. Paul Mulamba, who is an employee of the Zambia Council for the Handicapped and who was a trainee in the Zambia project, attended the convention and appeared on the program. Reports on the Zambia project were also given by Dr. Harold Snider, who headed the training team, and Sister Sue Micich, who is President of the NFB of Wisconsin and was a member of the team. The reports were given Thursday morning, July 8:

Remarks by Dr. Harold Snider

"Dr. Jernigan and fellow Federationists, since 1974 I have been hearing about the plight of blind people in Zambia from my sister-in-law who teaches at the University of Zambia. I knew that blind people in other parts of the world have truly terrible

problems; but, like most Americans and most blind people, the real impact of the plight of the blind in developing countries is rather unreal. You don't really understand how bad it can be until you go to a developing country and experience the difficulties of your blind brothers and sisters in that country.

"In May, 1981, I went to Lusaka, Zambia, to present the keynote speech to the African Travel Association. While I was attending that conference, the problems of blind Zambians were laid out for me in vivid detail. After showing me the very bad living conditions of blind Zambians (their lack of mobility skills and their inability to get materials in Braille), the Minister of Labor and Social Services asked me to see what I could do to find people and the money to come back to Zambia to introduce the use of the long white cane.

"On returning to the United States, I went to see Dr. Jernigan, and I told him about my firsthand experience and the

terrible needs that there were for mobility training and Braille. Of course, whenever we must consider whether to spend money overseas, we must balance that need with our own limited resources which we must use to fight the battle here at home. After some lengthy correspondence and discussion, Dr. Jernigan decided to send me and Sister Sue Micich to Zambia in December. On my part, I agreed to seek appropriate funding for the project. Even if funding was not available, our first training course would go ahead. I began to write grant proposals to corporations which had a financial interest in Zambia. Writing grant proposals is a bit like betting on the horses in that you lose much more often than you win. The grant proposals were written through the non-profit organization which I direct, which is called Access for the Handicapped. Of course, it was obvious from the outset that the National Federation of the Blind would sponsor the project and provide the people, canes, and necessary expertise.

"About the same time that the first training course was under way in Zambia, the International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation decided to make a grant of \$150,000 for the project. ITT has extensive business interests in Zambia. Therefore, it is very much concerned about doing helpful things for the people of that country. The project will finish at the end of 1982 with the training of 40 blind mobility instructors, each of whom will make a commitment to train 50 blind Zambians. Several thousand NFB canes will be brought to Zambia. In addition, the first print-to-Braille computer system will be provided so that Braille can be made available quickly to assist the blind in employment and in other ways. A training team of five Federationists will go to Zambia from July 22 until September 4. For seven weeks, these people will teach 20 more

blind Zambians how to use canes and to teach others to use them. A final visit will be made by a team in December to evaluate the project and do additional training of ten more Zambians. Needless to say, our original training course in December, 1981 was a great success. In the closing ceremony of that training course, Zambian government ministers and many other senior government officials expressed their gratitude to the National Federation of the Blind and to ITT.

"To me, perhaps more significant than the gratitude of the government for making their blind citizens independent travelers, was the heartfelt gratitude of our blind Zambian trainees. They said that they now no longer fell in ditches. And that really says it all as far as I'm concerned. We have well and truly answered the question about whether blind people can teach each other mobility, and we have answered it in a loud and clearly demonstrable way for all the world to see. You bet we can teach each other! The print-to-Braille computer, which we are bringing to Zambia is the best that American and European technology has to offer. The American made Braille translation system combined with the Thiel printer from West Germany will give blind Zambians a chance quickly to obtain printed material transcribed into Braille.

"The independence which our travel training is giving blind Zambians is just as significant as the independence their country received from the British in 1964. An interesting historical sidelight to blind Zambians is that during their war for independence in 1964 blind people acted as couriers carrying messages in Braille for liberation leadership. And that is why the government and people of Zambia have a very special place in their hearts for the blind.

"Finally, I have had several people ask me why it is important for us to be

involved in the Zambia project. First of all, it shows the skeptics and the people of little faith that we the blind really can teach mobility to each other, even under most adverse and foreign circumstances. Secondly, it is the right thing that we should help our blind brothers and sisters in Zambia or any other country when we can. I am grateful to ITT for its grant and to the Zambian government and the blind of Zambia for their cooperation. Finally, I am grateful to the officers and members of the National Federation of the Blind for giving me the encouragement, strength, and philosophy to undertake this project."

Remarks by Sister Sue Micich

"Several years ago when the National Federation of the Blind became a part of my life, one of the people who influenced my thinking was Dr. Isabelle Grant who I am sure many of you remember. She carried our message of a positive attitude about blindness to Asia, Africa and many other parts of the world. At that time I was excited about what Dr. Grant was doing and hoped that someday I would have a similar opportunity. So, when during a Cultural Exchange and International Program Committee meeting I heard of the developing plans to teach cane travel and our philosophy of blindness in Zambia, I was more than enthusiastic about the project.

"When plans became more concrete and I learned that I would be going to Zambia, I wanted to find out all I could about the country. We would be there during the summer which is the rainy season. Zambia is 18 degrees South of the Equator which places it in Southern Africa. It is the former Northern Rhodesia. It is around the size of Texas. It became independent in 1964. Our dollar is worth around 84 Zambian cents. The more I learned about

the country the more enthusiastic I became. Also, the idea of sharing our philosophy of blindness and the long cane technique with blind Zambians was an opportunity I did not want to pass up.

"The training program was held at the College for Teachers of the Handicapped in Lusaka, the capital. We started the students out by having them walk up and down the dirt path in back of the college so that they could get comfortable with the long cane. It was not long before the students were traveling the neighborhood. As we were putting together the routes, our assistant, Mary Ann, needed to explain to me what a round about is. I had not come across that term in my travel experience.

"Three of our eight students were sighted so they were expected to wear sleep shades. Mr. Nandwe had no problem with this, but the two women needed to get used to wearing them in public. The students seemed to understand and accept the philosophy behind using the sleep shades.

"After three days of training we started going to other areas of Lusaka. Lusaka is spread out, and public transportation is limited so we called on the American embassy for help. The former United States Ambassador to Zambia, Frank Weisner, was quite supportive of the project. The American Women's Club provided transportation for a week; then we had the use of the embassy van for the second week. The Council for the Handicapped also provided some transportation.

"Our first trip was to the Permosse Hotel which is the most luxurious hotel in Zambia. The purpose was to give the students a chance to gain some skill at traveling in a building. While the students were busy at their travel lesson Harold Snider and I were Brailleing the elevators. Although we were there to teach the students, I believe the public learned some-

thing as well. We also went to the University of Zambia. The library staff was not real happy about having the students walking around the library, but I went in with some of them one at a time and I don't believe we interfered much with anyone's studying. We went to the Memosa Farm for the Handicapped. There are several of these farms in Zambia where handicapped people live and raise crops. Some of the residents do have jobs elsewhere.

"The main street in Lusaka, Ciro Road, is very busy. It has three stoplights. Although there are few stoplights in Zambia we felt that it was important for the students to become a little familiar with them. The Council for the Handicapped and a couple of the students felt that we needed to have the police with us on this route. This was partly for the safety factor since the Zambian motorists had not yet been introduced to the long white cane. I was a little skeptical about having the police along, but it all worked out very well. We had three policemen along with us the first time who just walked along and did not interfere. The second time there was a mixup so we went alone. I was glad about this because it was important for the students to know that they could do it themselves.

"As we were walking along a news reporter and a photographer came up to find out what was going on. I had not realized that the newspaper office was right across the street. As I was talking with the reporter about the project I was very conscious of whether or not I was making my points clear. This was my first experience of being interviewed in another country. They took an excellent picture of the students which was on the front page of the *Zambian Times* the next morning. The radio network uses the newspaper as a source for its news stories, so our project was also mentioned on the radio.

"We had hoped to have had a Braille map of Lusaka, but this did not materialize. Therefore, we and the students made (out of flour and water) our own map of the routes around the college.

"At the concluding ceremony, a gentleman from England who had taught travel in the past asked me if we had taught sighted guide techniques. I was polite and told him that we really did not have time for that. I went on to tell him that the students did very well and I had confidence they could go wherever they wanted using their long cane.

"As with any new student, in the beginning we needed to give them encouragement that they could travel independently. They had the usual fears of exploring new areas on their own. As time went on they gained more confidence in themselves. I wondered how much we could accomplish in three weeks because I had generally taught people over a longer period of time. At the end of the program, however, I was quite satisfied with how well the students were doing and had confidence in their ability to go back to their homes and teach others. I am sure peripatologists and mobility instructors would cringe at the thought of any of us teaching travel.

"Although it is important for blind people to learn to use the cane, it is often more important that we learn a positive attitude about blindness. We can do the things we want to do if we believe in ourselves and have the opportunity. We spent a lot of time on philosophy: listening to Dr. Jernigan's speeches and also to Dr. tenBroek, discussing the speeches, reading other materials about blindness and the Federation, and talking about discrimination. In the beginning the students had a hard time understanding that they had most likely experienced discrimination. Mr. Mulamba, who is here today, was one of the more verbal ones about this, but as the

training progressed, he was more able to see where discrimination had occurred in his life. He began to understand what the philosophy of the Federation is.

"A training program would not be complete without having a picnic where the students can grill their own meat. We had our picnic at Dr. Lovelace's home where Harold and I were staying. Although they were a little hesitant at first, the students did grill their own hotdogs and hamburgers and seemed to enjoy it. We gain confidence

in ourselves in a variety of ways.

"I left Zambia feeling good about what had taken place there and am glad that people will be going back to continue the project. As time goes on I hope that we have further opportunities for international projects like this one. There is a lot of work which needs to be done regarding blindness in this country, but our blind friends throughout the world can use some help, too."

PROCLAMATION BY GOVERNOR OF ARIZONA

The momentum of our movement continues to grow, as does the recognition of the central part which the Federation is playing in the betterment of the lives of the blind. In this context the following proclamation issued by the Governor of Arizona takes on added significance:

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

STATE OF ARIZONA

Bruce Babbitt—Governor

NATIONAL FEDERATION

OF THE BLIND DAY

Whereas, the determination and tenacity of sightless persons in overcoming their disability and living a productive and normal life is proved daily by countless blind persons; and

Whereas, the White Cane—both as

symbol and as fact—is of tremendous help to the blind person in his travels and in his productive work; and

Whereas, public awareness and appreciation of the White Cane and its meaning can contribute even more to the ability of the blind person to walk through doors of opportunity and accomplishment; and

Whereas, the National Federation of the Blind of Arizona carries on a continuing program to inform the public about the meaning and symbolism of the White Cane; and,

Whereas, all of us should become increasingly aware of the significance of the White Cane and exercise the fullest courtesy and caution in every encounter with its bearers;

Now, therefore, I, Bruce Babbitt, Governor of the State of Arizona, do hereby proclaim Saturday, October 23, 1982, as

NATIONAL FEDERATION

OF THE BLIND DAY

in observance of the occasion of the

Arizona Federation's 36th Annual Meeting.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the State of Arizona.

Bruce Babbitt
Governor

Done at the Capitol in Phoenix on this fourteenth day of October in the Year of Our Lord One Thousand Nine Hundred and Eighty-two and of the Independence of the United States of America the Two Hundred and Sixth.

RECIPES

(Note: This month's recipes come from Federationists in South Dakota. More specifically, these recipes come from Anna Marklund and Doris Pigsley of the Black Hills Chapter.)

CINNAMON ROLLS WITH CAKE MIX

by *Doris Pigsley*

Ingredients: 2½ cups warm water
2 pkgs. dry yeast
1 regular size yellow cake mix
4½ to 5 cups flour
Brown sugar, cinnamon and nuts

Directions: Dissolve yeast in water, add cake mix and flour. Let raise. Roll to ½ inch thick. Spread with butter, cinnamon and sugar. Roll like a jelly roll and cut in ½ inch slices. Let rise. Bake at 350 for 15 to 20 minutes. Dough may be refrigerated up to 24 hours. Glaze if desired.

Makes two 9 by 13 pans. This may be cut in half. For caramel rolls, put extra brown sugar in bottom of buttered pans with about 2 tablespoons of white Karo syrup.

DELICIOUS CAKE TOPPING

by *Anna Marklund*

Directions: Melt over hot water: 1 large Hershey Milk Chocolate Bar with Almonds

Fold melted bar into 9 to 12 oz. Cool Whip

Frost Angel Food Cake. Makes a delightful light dessert.

CHERRY CHEESE CAKE

by *Anna Marklund*

Crust:

Mix together: 1½ cups flour
1½ sticks margarine
½ cup chopped nuts (pecans preferably)

Pat into 9 x 13 pan. Press in nuts.

Bake at 350 for 15 minutes.

Filling:

Directions: 1 large pkg. Philadelphia Cream Cheese softened
Blend cheese well with 1 cup powdered sugar
Fold into pie shell which has cooled

Use can of cherry pie filling for topping.

MONITOR MINIATURES □ □ □ □ □

□ Speaks to NCSAB:

President Jernigan spoke at the meeting of the National Council of State Agencies for the Blind at the Bien Ville Hotel in New Orleans Wednesday, November 10. The topic of the address was: "The Importance of Philosophy in Rehabilitation and its Impact on Facilitating Personal Adjustment." Federationists will remember that the President-Elect of NCSAB (Mr. Phil Peterson, head of the Michigan Commission for the Blind) appeared on the program of the National Federation of the Blind convention in Minneapolis in July. Mr. John Mullin, one of the leaders of the NFB of Michigan, is Chairman of the Board of the Michigan Commission for the Blind.

□ From North Carolina:

Earl Jennings has resigned as Director of the North Carolina Division of Services for the Blind. His successor is Herman Gruber. Federationists in the state express the opinion that Mr. Gruber will be a competent and cooperative Administrator. We congratulate him on his appointment and wish for him a successful tenure of office.

□ Resigns:

Late in September Sine Olesen, who has served as Librarian at the Iowa Commission for the Blind for almost three years, announced that she would leave that position in October. At the time of this writing it is not known who will replace her. During 1961 Miss Olesen served for a brief period in a secretarial capacity with the National Federation of the Blind. In fact, this was her first introduction to the field of blindness. Her employment in the Library at the Iowa Commission for the Blind began later in the 1960's.

□ From New Hampshire:

The convention of the National Federation of the Blind of New Hampshire was held September 24-26. The following people were elected to office: President: Theresa Herron; First Vice President: Carol Holmes; Second Vice President: Donna Maglin; Secretary: Ed Meskys; Treasurer: Violet Constant; and Board Members: Al Constant, Eddie Vachon, and David Brownell.

□ Appointed by Governor:

Glenn Latham, a member of the Pierce County Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind of Washington, was recently appointed by the Governor of Washington to be a voting trustee on the Board of the Washington State School for the Blind. In making the appointment the Governor wrote: "It gives me great pleasure to inform you that I am appointing you as a member of the Board of Trustees for the State School for the Blind. Your term of office is effective immediately, and will run until July 1, 1983. I am confident you will do an excellent job."

□ Resolution:

Proposal No. R82-168

File No. 136

Introduced by Council Member Erickson

Request of County Executive

RESOLUTION NO. R82-168
A Resolution Proclaiming
October 1, 2 & 3, 1982, as
NATIONAL FEDERATION
OF THE BLIND WEEKEND

Whereas, the National Federation of the Blind has, since 1940, worked to inte-

grate blind and visually impaired persons into American society so they are seen as normal, participating citizens; and

Whereas, it is commendable that blind and visually impaired persons are speaking for themselves with a positive voice through the National Federation of the Blind; and

Whereas, the National Federation of the Blind is working throughout the United States to help blind and visually impaired persons secure gainful employment, for their benefit and that of society as a whole; and

Whereas, the National Federation of the Blind of Washington is holding its 1982 convention on October 1, 2 and 3, at the Sherwood Inn in the City of Tacoma; *Now, therefore*,

Be it resolved by the Pierce County Executive and County Council:

Section 1. The Pierce County Executive and County Council hereby proclaim the weekend of October 1, 2 and 3, 1982, as **NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND WEEKEND** for Pierce County, and urge all citizens and employers to support the work of the National Federation of the Blind.

Passed this 21st day of *September*, 1982.

Signed by members of the
Pierce County Council, and the
Pierce County Executive

□ Proclamation:

PROCLAMATION
City of Seattle
Office of the Mayor

Whereas, the National Federation of the Blind of Washington is an organization of blind citizens working to improve the quality of life for all blind people; and

Whereas, Saturday, September 18, 1982, the Federation is holding its annual Walk-A-Thon/Run-A-Thon; and

Whereas, a major focus of the event will be to replace stereotypes about blindness with a positive image which says that blind people are very normal;

Now, therefore, I, Charles Royer, Mayor of the City of Seattle, do hereby proclaim Saturday, September 18, 1982, as **FEDERATION OF THE BLIND OF WASHINGTON WALK-A-THON/RUN-A-THON DAY** in Seattle.

Charles Royer,
Mayor

□ From Lori Stayer of New York:

"Betty Walker tells us that Nancy Reagan's new book, *To Love a Child*, is dedicated to a Federationist, Mary Wright, of the Mid Hudson Chapter (in New York), who is also featured in one of the chapters on foster grandparenting."

□ Cheryl Finley Honored:

Cheryl Finley, the enthusiastic and effervescent Chairman of the Cultural Exchange and International Program Committee of the National Federation of the Blind, is widely known and loved throughout the movement. She is one of the leaders of the National Federation of the Blind of Iowa and is President of the Orientation Center Alumni Chapter of that state. She is also the high school librarian in the public schools of Clarion, Iowa—lending to her title "Marian the Librarian from Clarion." On August 2, 1982, she was honored for her work by the Clarion Jaycees. The plaque she received reads: "Outstanding young educator award presented to Cheryl Finley awarded by the Clarion Jaycees."

□ From Al Saile, 18932 Lindenhouse Road, Gaithersburg, Maryland 20879:

Dear Dr. Jernigan:

Enclosed is a check for \$40 from Aquarian Associates, our firm name, for the sale of a McKune Portable Whirlpool bath. An additional \$40 is being forwarded to the attention of Sharon Gold, as the first sale of a whirlpool resulting from our fund-raising effort from a customer in Stockton, California. We believe this sale originated from Ken Volenti who expressed great interest in our product at the National Convention and will credit the sale to him unless we are informed otherwise.

It is befitting that the first fundraising success originates from California, the state where there is such a need for funds to win our case. This first sale proves that distribution of our brochures for fundraising can be a success, although results to date are lagging. It really does not take much imagination to stir peoples' interests in relieving pain a safe way and the free money back and full five year product warranty should be stressed. Both the user and our Federation benefit. A reminder for all to participate by getting those brochures out to persons who indicate they suffer pain from arthritis, bursitis, back, leg or muscle pain, or are athletic and want relief from strained muscles. It works.

□ Arizona Convention:

The NFB of Arizona held its convention October 22-24 at the Ramada Inn in Phoenix. The Charter of Affiliation with the National Federation of the Blind was ratified; the Model Constitution for State Affiliates was adopted; Senator DeConcini was present for an address and questions; over \$1,100 was raised in contributions and pledges at the banquet; and Art Dinges was elected President to succeed Jim Carlock.

Others elected were: Fred Rockwell, First Vice President; Harlene Stone, Second Vice President; Tom Johnson, Secretary; and Terri Dallas, Treasurer. Elected to the Board were: Carl Hammann, Lee Kerr, John Tsosje, Catherine Benson, Jim Carlock, and Jim Marlar. It was a spirited and enthusiastic convention.

□ Article Published:

Rami Rabby is not only the corporate Secretary of the National Federation of the Blind but also a member of the Volunteer Field Service Network of Job Opportunities for the Blind (JOB). He operates a management consulting business and is gaining increasing recognition as an author in the field. The Sunday, October 10, 1982, edition of the *Wall Street Journal's National Business Employment Weekly* features an article by Mr. Rabby entitled: "Managing Your Resume By Objective." The article gives practical pointers on how to write a resume and when and how resumes should be used. The following editor's note appears in italics in conjunction with the article: *Rami Rabby is a New York-based career management counselor and consultant in human resources planning. He also serves as volunteer coordinator for the Job Opportunities for the Blind, a project of the National Federation of the Blind.*

□ Songbooks:

As Federationists know, we have both Braille and print Songbooks for sale at \$1.00 per copy. However, we also have some Braille copies of an earlier Songbook made in 1972. Although it does not contain some of the songs in the book we now sell, it is still quite useful and should not be allowed simply to stay in the National Office unused. Therefore, as long as these 1972 Songbooks last, we will mail them without charge on a first come first

serve basis to anyone who requests them. We should know and use the songs of our movement.

□ Rhode Island Convention:

The NFB of Rhode Island held its twelfth annual convention at the Holiday Inn in Providence on Saturday, October 16, 1982. Attending the banquet were: Governor J. Joseph Garrahy, United States Senator John Chafee, Congresswoman Claudine Schneider, and several ranking members of the Rhode Island state legislature. During his banquet appearance, Governor Garrahy called attention to NFB of Rhode Island President Ed Beck's outstanding volunteer achievements and emphasized that he had been privileged to present Mr. Beck with the Volunteer Man of the Year Award for 1982. At the conclusion of his address, Governor Garrahy installed Jim Gashel, who was the national representative at the convention, as an honorary citizen of Rhode Island.

□ Braille Dymo Labeler:

The 3M Braille Dymo Labeler is now available from the National Center at a cost of \$37.95. The wheel is labeled in Braille and print and produces the alphabet, some Grade 2 abbreviations, punctuation marks, the number sign, and the dollar sign. Please make your check payable to the *National Federation of the Blind* and send it to: 1800 Johnson Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21230. Federationists have been asking for these labelers for a long time. Now, we have them available.

□ Focus on the Family:

Mrs. Ramona Walhof, newly appointed Director of the Idaho Commission for the Blind, was featured on the "Focus on the Family" radio program on November 29. 180 stations carry this program—some for

15 minutes and some for 30 minutes.

□ Phoenix in 1984:

The 1984 convention of the National Federation of the Blind will be held June 30 through July 10 at the new Hyatt Regency Hotel in Phoenix, Arizona. Room rates continue to be extremely favorable: singles, \$23.00; doubles and twins, \$24.00; and triples, \$27.00. This is one of the finest hotels we have ever had. It is interesting to note that the American Council of the Blind is holding its 1983 convention in Phoenix at rates of \$34.00 for single rooms and \$38.00 for doubles and twins. It is reported that the 1984 convention will be held in Philadelphia at \$38.00 per room, whether single or double.

□ Charlie Erickson Has Accident:

Many strange things have occurred at the Iowa Commission for the Blind since 1978. Early Friday morning, October 22, 1982, Charlie Erickson was found on the quarry tile basement floor of the Commission building. He had reportedly gone over the railing at the sixth floor level and fallen all the way to the basement, more than seventy feet. Our best information would indicate that both legs were broken; ribs were broken; the pelvis was broken; a lung was punctured; and other injuries were sustained. An air of mystery surrounds this tragedy, and details are lacking. The circumstances of the event and how it could have happened are not known. How, for instance, could Charlie have fallen all the way from the sixth floor to a quarry tile basement and come out of it alive? For that matter, how could he have fallen over the railing at all? If he did not fall from the sixth floor, why was he on the basement floor (wearing only his shorts) with broken legs and other injuries? With such a fall how could most of his body not have

sustained injuries? Why were there no injuries (except apparently minor damage) to the head or the face? Why no damage to the arms, the feet, or the ankles? Did he (as originally rumored) have a heart attack before falling—or did he (as some later

claimed) have no heart attack at all, or only a minor heart attack after the fall instead of before it? Be all of this as it may, Charlie miraculously survived; and (at the last report) he was conscious and about to undergo surgery.

THE BRAILLE MONITOR
1800 JOHNSON STREET
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21230

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